United Nations

Daily Highlights

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council decides unanimously to extend UNIFIL mandate for six months to 31 July; reiterates support for Lebanon's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence; says States should not threaten or use force against other States.

+ Secretary-General, receiving Permanent Representative of Democratic People's Republic of Korea yesterday, says he has been closely following developments concerning Korean peninsula; hopes DPRK and Republic of Korea will resume negotiations.

+ British relief worker with UNHCR killed, two wounded, by armed gang in Bosnia and Herzegovina; victim is eleventh UNHCR worker killed in former Yugoslavia.

+ WHO Executive Board concludes ninety-third session in Geneva, having recommended establishment of joint United Nations AIDS programme.

+ Preparatory Committee for World Summit for Social Development to begin first substantive session at Headquarters on Monday.

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The Security Council today decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for six months to 31 July. It took that action, responding to a request by the Lebanese Government and to the Secretary-General's recent report on UNIFIL, by unanimously adopting resolution 895 (1994).

In his report, the Secretary-General said UNIFIL contributed to stability and the safety of the population in the south of Lebanon. However, Israel still occupied parts of southern Lebanon and the Force continued to be prevented from implementing its mandate. Israel had said that it had no territorial claims in Lebanon and that a temporary "security zone" was needed to prevent attacks against it.

(more)

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In a statement read out by its President, Karel Kovanda (Czech Republic), after the adoption of today's resolution, the Security Council reiterated its strong support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries. It asserted that any State should refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any other State.

The Council also stressed the urgent need for the implementation of resolution 425 (1978), which approved the Force's terms of references and general guidelines, in all its aspects. It reiterated its full support for the Taif Agreement and for the continued efforts of the Lebanese Government to consolidate peace, national unity and security in the country. The Council also commended the Government for its efforts to extend its authority in the south of Lebanon in full coordination with UNIFIL. It went on to express concern about the continuing violence in southern Lebanon and regret at the loss of civilian life, and urged all parties to exercise restraint.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali yesterday received the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who expressed his Government's appreciation for the Secretary-General's recent visit to Pyongyang, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General said that since his visit, he had continued to closely follow developments concerning the Korean peninsula, including the discussions between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) respectively.

The Secretary-General expressed the hope that the outcome of those discussions would be positive and constructive, the spokesman said. He also hoped that negotiations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea would resume.

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A British relief worker was killed and two others were wounded yesterday, when a gang of armed men hijacked their vehicle in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The victims were members of a British team of convoy drivers of the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) who had been assigned to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the former Yugoslavia. The dead man, who was identified as Paul Goodall, joined the convoy team last November.

High Commissioner Sadako Ogata condemned the "senseless, cold-blooded killing" and offered her condolences to the family of the murdered aid worker. Mr. Goodall was the eleventh person killed while working with the UNHCR humanitarian relief operation in the former Yugoslavia. According to a report issued today, UNHCR is discussing the incident with the Bosnian Government.

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The Executive Board of the World Health Organization (WHO) today concluded its ninety-third session, during which it reviewed WHO programmes and working methods and adopted, by consensus, a series of resolutions on major health issues, including tuberculosis, infant nutrition and other issues. In what several of its members described as an historic event, the Board also passed a resolution recommending the establishment of a joint United Nations Programme on AIDS. Those resolutions, together with other recommendations of the Board, will be submitted to the forty-seventh World Health Assembly in May.

The Executive Board's meeting in Geneva was being conducted against a background of "global economic and political turbulence", WHO Director-General Hiroshi Nakajima said in his opening speech. That, combined with ethnic, religious and territorial conflicts, made the WHO's mission to improve the health of humanity more difficult, he stressed.

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The Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development will hold the first of three substantive sessions at Headquarters from 31 January to 11 February. The Committee will analyse core issues and prospective policy measures for the Summit, which will be convened in March 1995 in Copenhagen, Denmark. It will also discuss the status of preparations for the Summit; draft provisional rules of procedure of the Summit; and arrangements for its second session.

The General Assembly called for the convening of the Summit and established the Preparatory Committee in resolution 47/92. Its objectives include expressing a world-wide commitment to putting the needs of people at the centre of development and international cooperation, and stimulating international cooperation in the implementation of social policies. The Summit should "address in creative ways the interaction between the social function of the State, market responses to social demands, and the imperatives of sustainable development", the Assembly said.

Coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, the Summit will be preceded by a meeting of personal representatives of Heads of State or Government or other high-level officials in order to confront the issues of poverty, unemployment and social disintegration.

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